

Le Duan

# Political and Military Forces in Revolutionary War

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The August Revolution, like people's revolutions in other countries, has taught the South Vietnamese revolutionaries that any revolution with a marked popular character must use both political and military forces to secure victory. Revolution being the uprising of the oppressed and exploited masses, one must adopt the revolutionary mass viewpoint to understand revolutionary violence which involves two forces - political and military forces - and two forms of struggle - political and armed struggle - and thereby to realize the offensive position of revolution when revolutionary situations are ripe.

On the contrary, if one considers revolutionary violence merely from the point of view of armed struggle, and consequently takes into account only the military force of the two sides to appraise the balance of forces between revolution and counter-revolution, mistakes will be inevitable: either one will underestimate the strength of the revolution and dare not mobilize the masses for insurrection, or, once the insurrection has been launched, one will not dare step up the offensive to push ahead the revolution, or when the armed struggle has been unleashed, one cannot avoid falling back to a defensive strategy.

In 1959-1960, when the American imperialists and their henchmen used most barbarous fascist means to sow terror and carry out mass slaughter, the South Vietnamese revolutionaries held that the enemy had sustained a basic political defeat and could no longer rule as in the past, while the people had come to realize more and more clearly that they could no longer live under the enemy's yoke and had to rise up and wage a life-and-death struggle to liberate themselves. Under those circumstances the South Vietnamese people rose up, using mainly political struggle, broke the enemy's grip, controlled large rural areas, wrested back power, redistributed land, set up 'self-management committees', made every effort to develop their forces in every field, and launched a widespread people's war to carry on their liberation struggle.

In South Vietnam, as the vast countryside has a natural economy not very dependent on the towns and an almost exclusively peasant population living on agriculture, the aggressors and their henchmen ruling in urban centres cannot establish a strict control over the rural areas. That is why, when conditions are ripe for revolution, the villages constitute the weakest spot where the puppet

administration becomes shaky and sinks into a crisis, hence the possibility of most rapidly starting *local insurrections* and of destroying the enemy's power apparatus considerably.

After liberating extensive rural areas, the people gradually built up large strong armed forces, rapidly organized powerful political forces, vigorously boosted the revolutionary movement throughout the South, stepped up political and military struggle, firmly upheld their offensive position, foiled all the enemy's political and military schemes, and kept on pushing forward the South Vietnamese revolution. Since then, *the close combination of political and military struggle constitutes the basic form of revolutionary violence in South Vietnam*, the most suitable one to resist neocolonialism. It has been used not only in the course of insurrections, but also in dealing with the American imperialists' 'special warfare' and limited warfare'. This combination of political and military struggle is carried out in accordance with the balance of forces in the *three strategic rural, urban and hill-forest areas*, as well as with the general tasks of the revolution and the specific tasks of each period.

Like the national-democratic revolution all over the country in the past, the present South Vietnamese revolution has the workers and peasants as its main force and the worker-peasant alliance led by the working class as the cornerstone of the national united front. Therefore, it cannot repose exclusively on the revolutionary forces in the countryside, but has to build up revolutionary forces in the towns as well, and impel revolutionary struggle in both of these areas. In the process of the struggle the revolutionary movements in both areas have been closely co-ordinated, greatly influencing and vigorously impelling each other. If the revolutionary upsurge in the countryside some years ago made its impact strongly felt upon the revolutionary movement in the towns, the seething struggle of the urban masses now has created highly favourable conditions for uprisings in the countryside and the extension of the people's war.

The recent fierce political struggle of the townsfolk has restrained, sometimes slowed down or seriously upset, the military activities of the enemy on the battlefields, thus efficaciously helping the offensive of the revolutionary armed forces; conversely, the military successes on the battlefields, like the repeated attacks by the liberation troops against the enemy's rear bases and dens in the towns and cities have accelerated the growth of the urban revolutionary movement.

In short, *the South Vietnamese revolution develops by using the revolutionary violence of the masses to launch local insurrections in the countryside, organizing revolutionary forces in both rural and urban areas - military and political forces alike - and holding firm the offensive position to attack the enemy with military and*

*political actions and agitation among his troops in all the three strategic rural, urban and hill-forest areas so as to smash gradually all his military and political activities and win complete victory.*

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